

From: Officer in Charge, NA-XX, CSNTS Block XX
To: CSNTS Awards Board

Subj: CSNTS LTGen Taber AWARD NOMINATION ICO MIDN 1/c Xxxxxx Xxxxxx

1. Midn Xxxxxx came to our cruise block w/little sailing experience, but an extensive aviation background. He is a leader in the USNA Flying club, and an experienced navigator and weather forecaster. It is on the basis of this experience and his valuable contributions in navigation and weather that qualify him for nomination for the LTGEN Traber award.
2. None of the 3/c had a sailing background. None were experienced navigators, and most remembered little of their Plebe-year SEANAV instruction. At the same time, a renewed emphasis on navigational skills introduced by CDR Vanderburg necessitated more attention to chart preparation, log-keeping, and routine navigational briefs than had been customary in the sailing program. Into this void stepped Midn Xxxxxx, who with consummate skill and unfailing good humor led our crew to superb chart preparation for our voyage to Little Creek and Charleston, and who proceeded to teach and instill the highest caliber of professionalism and skill in the navigation watch. I have participated in the CSNTS program since 1996, and the depth and precision of navigational data provided routinely by every midshipman in our crew this year far, far surpassed anything I have encountered heretofore. On our vessel, Midn Xxxxxx deserved sole credit for helping our crew rise to the challenge and the level of excellence encouraged by CDR Vanderburg.
3. My own meteorological skills as a volunteer coach are minimal. I know what the books, and limited experience, are able to teach. Midn Xxxxxx assisted our navigational efforts by providing a seasoned evaluation of weather conditions in the semi-tropical conditions encountered off Cape Hatteras and south. We encountered some interesting conditions, including a sizeable waterspout which followed us about two miles astern for nearly an hour in the morning of our third day afloat and some highly variable storm conditions on the northbound leg. Midn Xxxxxx kept a detailed and accurate weather watch and helped us stay prepared for unfamiliar conditions.
4. Our strongest challenge was fighting the Gulf Stream current on the southbound leg. While other vessels chose to doggedly drive into the 3-knot current, Midn Xxxxxx consulted his tide tables, and communicated at length with the skipper of a passing freighter to obtain up-to-date information on the western boundaries of the Stream, sufficient to find a near but safe offshore range and bearing to permit us to sail southward inside the head current. As a result, we made up the nearly 35 nautical miles that separated us from the lead OTC vessel in one day, and by sharing Midn Xxxxxx's calculations with other vessels, helped the rearmost of these maintain squadron integrity and adhere to an ambitious southbound PIM.
5. In summary, Midn Xxxxxx was one of the most impressive midshipmen with whom I have ever worked. He is knowledgeable, responsible and mature beyond his years. He is an excellent sailor, an outstanding navigator and meteorologist, and a perfect candidate for the Taber Award.

I. M. OIC